

## Case Study

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### The company

**A family-run, creative enterprise delivering high-quality outcomes on high-end projects, relying on word-of-mouth for growth and longer-term sustainability.**

Established by a husband and wife team, and running for 20 years, the company designs and delivers quality renovation and interior design projects on unique properties from traditional flint cottages to large country houses, from boutique hotels to apartments overlooking the French Alps.

Based in a quiet corner of rural England, the team are passionately committed to making a success of every project and success means that word-of-mouth is their sole source of new business.

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### The challenge

With success has come the need to grow, with a team now comprising two full-time and one part-time member of staff, in addition to the two Directors. Keen to establish a framework for staff management and development that is both enabling and legally compliant, without diverting too much energy and resource from the core business, the Directors sought professional advice and support on HR services.

#### The key business needs

- Recruitment and employment law
- HR systems and documentation
- Competencies, roles, responsibilities, and standards
- Performance management and appraisal

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### The approach

Newtonhr Ltd provided the company with a **comprehensive HR audit**, designed to establish the level of existing provision and HR expertise within the business identify current and future needs and highlight pressing issues, including:

- current documentation and employee systems (files, contracts, procedures, absence & reporting, job descriptions)
- the business structure and reporting lines
- recruitment selection and induction procedures
- training and development
- business strategy and growth plans including an overview of the market and competitors
- significant areas of competency and key roles
- examples of approaches to past HR issues
- meetings with a cross section of staff to discuss their company views.

The audit identified that while basic HR systems had been put in place, employment contracts did not reflect current legislation and there was no mechanism for keeping track of legislative developments.

In addition, staff were unclear about the division of responsibilities within the business, and expectations on competencies and standards had not been clearly communicated.

Finally, because there was no formal mechanism for performance monitoring and appraisal, staff had no way of knowing whether the Directors were happy with their performance or where improvement was needed.

**The Newtonhr-in-a-box** package, a micro HR service designed specifically to support the provision of high quality HR for the smaller business without over-complicating the service or over-burdening managers. In this case, an HR package was constructed to develop robust people management systems to support business growth, including:

- employment contract(s) including, temporary & casual documents as applicable to the organisation
- a staff handbook comprising of essential policy and procedures (specific to them), company expectations/standards, vision/mission & people structure, PAYE information and full contact details
- a simple absence reporting system (holidays, sickness, parental, maternity, paternity, dependants etc)
- 12 months email and telephone support
- HR updates during the 12 month period

The company opted to select two further "box bolt-ons" to their service.

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### The outcome

The business continues to grow, currently comprising 7 staff. The newtonhr-in-a-box service has been extended every year, for 4 years, to support the growth and changing needs of the business.